candy by Yuhuko Suzuki

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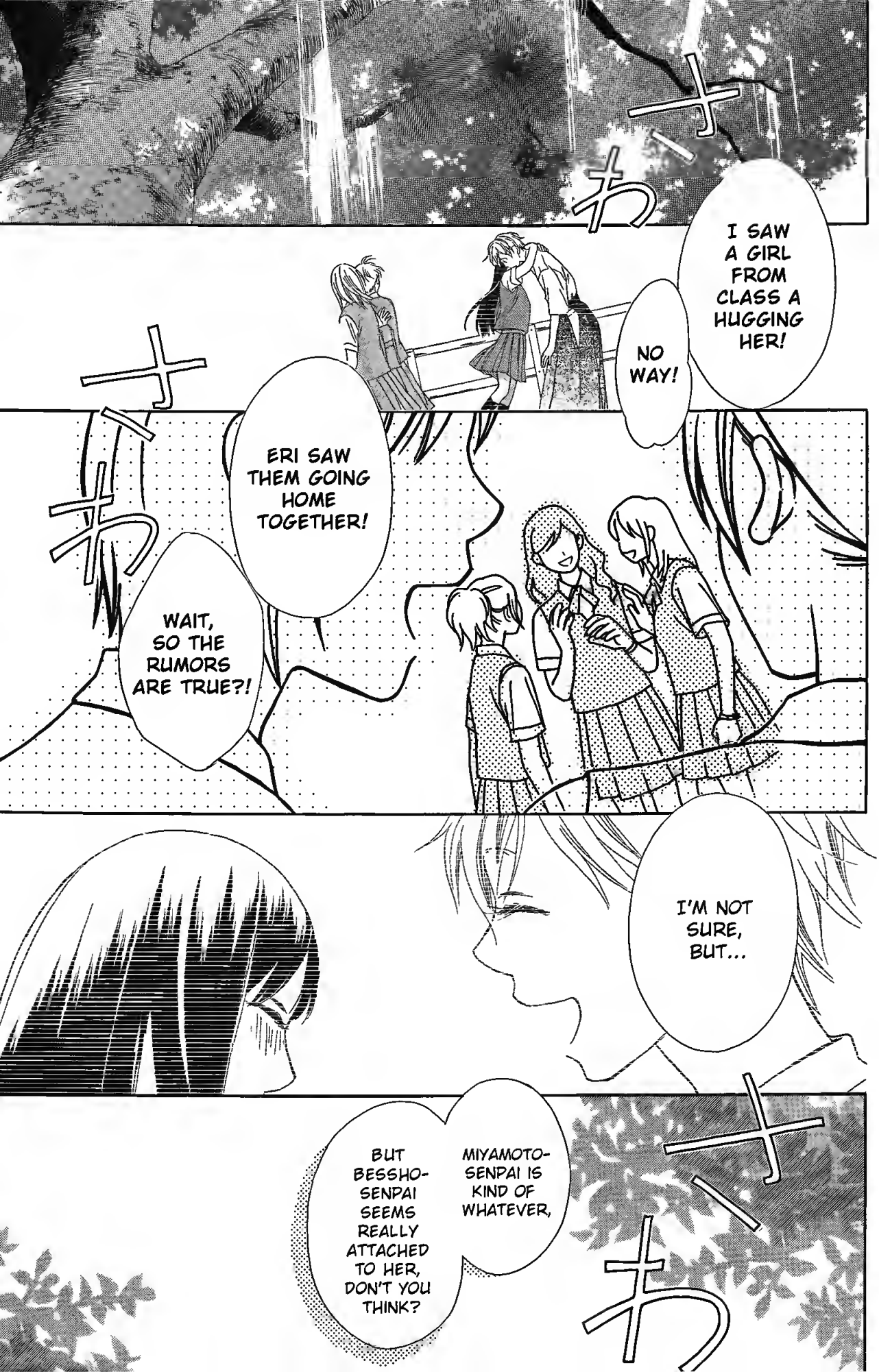
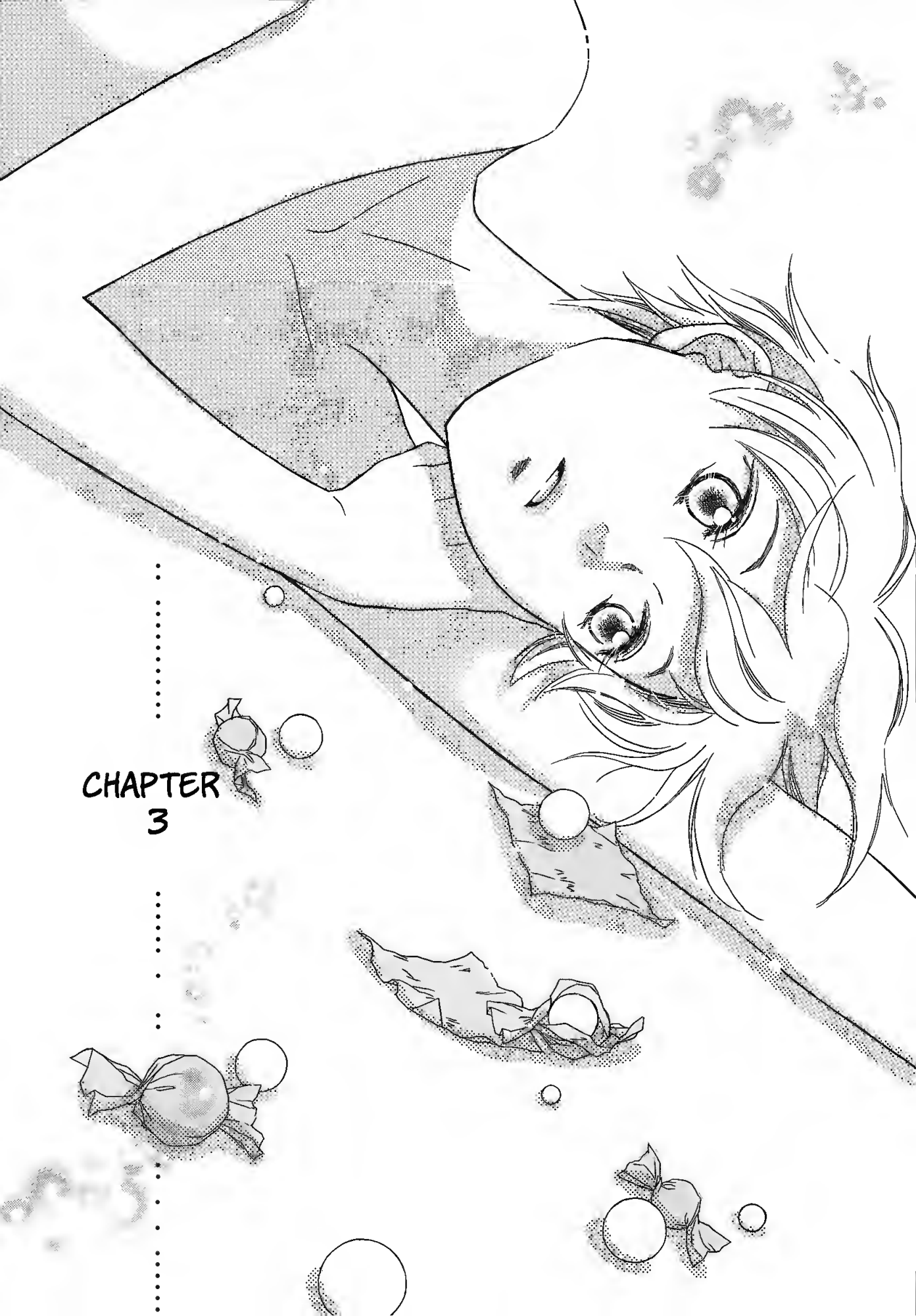
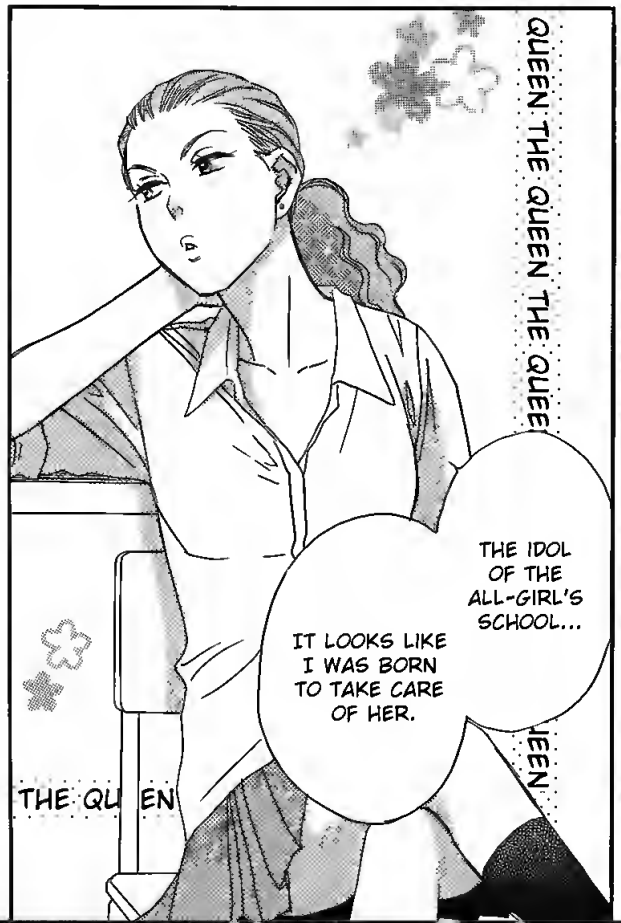

I SAW A GIRL FROM CLASS A HUGGING HER!
NO WAY!
ERI SAW THEM GOING HOME TOGETHER!
WAIT, SO THE RUMORS ARE TRUE?!
I'M NOT SURE, BUT...
MIYAMOTO-SENPAI IS KIND OF WHATEVER,
BUT BESSHO-SENPAI SEEMS REALLY ATTACHED TO HER, DON'T YOU THINK?

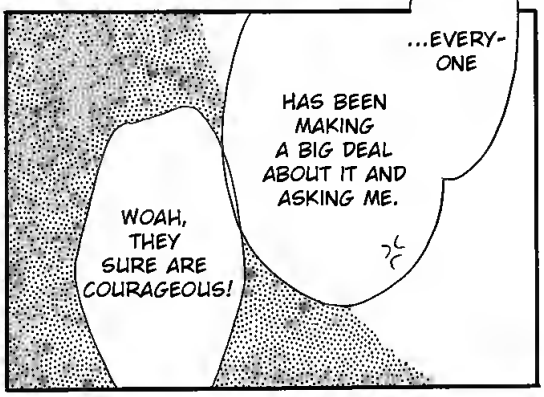

CHAPTER
3

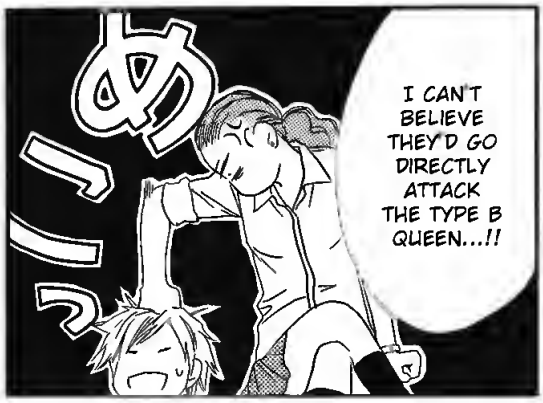
...THAT'S THE RUMOR I'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT YOU TWO.
WHY DO THEY THINK I'M KIND OF "WHATEVER"?
THAT'S WHAT YOU TAKE OFFENSE WITH...?

ICHIJOU, WHY ARE YOU BRINGING THIS UP ANYWAYS?
WELL...
THEY SAID THAT BECAUSE YOU HAVE A LOT OF RUMORS FLYING AROUND ABOUT YOU,
BUT BESSHO-SENPAI HASN'T HAD ANY RUMORS ABOUT HER UNTIL NOW.

HEY,
HEY,
ARE THE RUMORS TRUE?!


QUEEN THE QUEEN THE QUEE
THE IDOL OF THE ALL-GIRL'S SCHOOL...
IT LOOKS LIKE I WAS BORN TO TAKE CARE OF HER.
EEN
THE QU EN

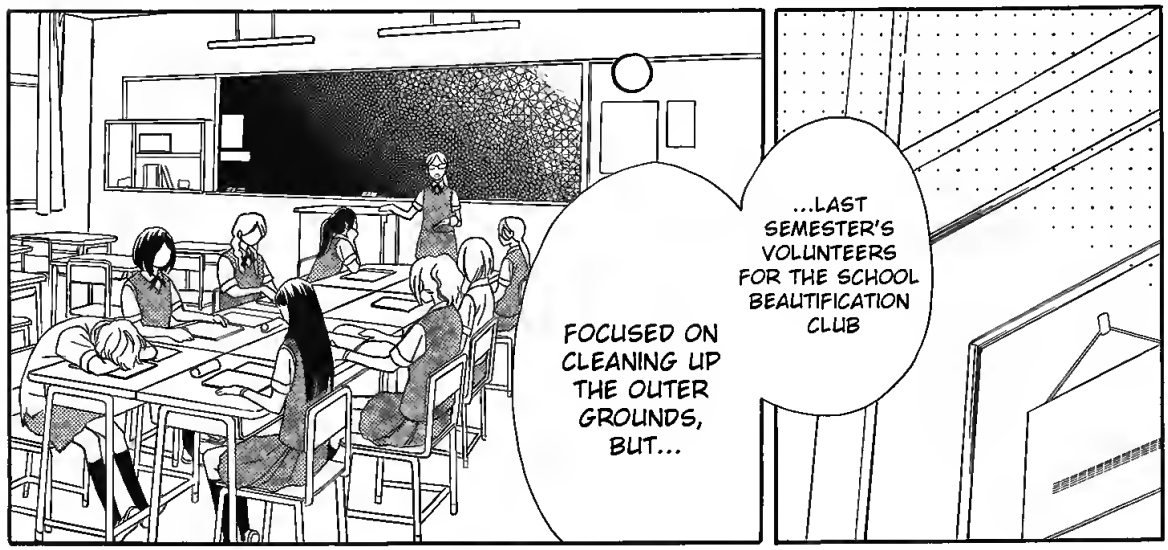

...EVERY-ONE
HAS BEEN MAKING A BIG DEAL ABOUT IT AND ASKING ME.
WOAH, THEY SURE ARE COURAGEOUS!


めこっ
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'D GO DIRECTLY ATTACK THE TYPE B QUEEN...!!

I HEARD YOU CAME IN SECOND PLACE AT THE BIG ARCHERY TOURNAMENT?
I WAS NUMBER ONE ON THE TEAM!
I'm the only second year that's a regular!
BUT THE COMPETITION BETWEEN REGULARS IS REALLY FIERCE RIGHT NOW,
SO I'VE GOT TO STAY FOCUSED.
Hmm
OH?
YOU'RE EATING A DIFFERENT KIND OF CANDY TODAY.
OH, THIS?
A FIRST YEAR CALLED TAMA-CHA... NONOMIYA-SAN GIVES THEM TO ME SOMETIMES.
SHE KNOWS THAT I LOVE CANDY.
SOMETIMES SHE BRINGS ME HANDMADE CANDIES, TOO.
Hee!
Oh, that chick who follows you around

I FEEL LIKE IT'S OKAY IF I DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO THE RUMORS,
BUT I WOULDN'T WANT SENPAI TO HATE ME BECAUSE OF THAT.
BUT, YOU KNOW...
AFTER ALL, I CAN'T HELP BUT WANT TO GO OUT...
WITH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LIKE SENPAI.
She's always looking at me...
OH WELL.
HOW MUCH ARE THEY DOING WHERE PEOPLE CAN SEE THEM?

I WANT TO BE WITH HER MORE.
I WANT TO HOLD HER HAND MORE.
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME TOGETHER, SINCE WE'RE IN DIFFERENT GRADES.
.....
SHE'S SO SIMPLE.


...LAST SEMESTER'S VOLUNTEERS FOR THE SCHOOL BEAUTIFICATION CLUB
FOCUSED ON CLEANING UP THE OUTER GROUNDS, BUT...

IN MAY, WE'LL BE EXPERIENCING A LOT OF RAIN, SO...
BESSHO-SAN, IS EVERYTHING OKAY? YOU SEEM DOWN.
Ah!
I'M SORRY, IT'S NOTHING!
EVER SINCE... OH!!
ふんっ
ふんっ

JEEZ, MIYAMOTO-SAN!
TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY!
HEY!
HYAA!!
...BESSHO-SAN?
AH!
SORRY, ER...

TH-
THERE WAS A BUG...
キャー
あぁ
あっ
A BUG?!?!
WHERE, WHERE, WHAT KIND OF BUG?!
EEE-EK!!
THERE! IS THAT IT?!
いやぁ
COME ON, EVERYONE, STOP!

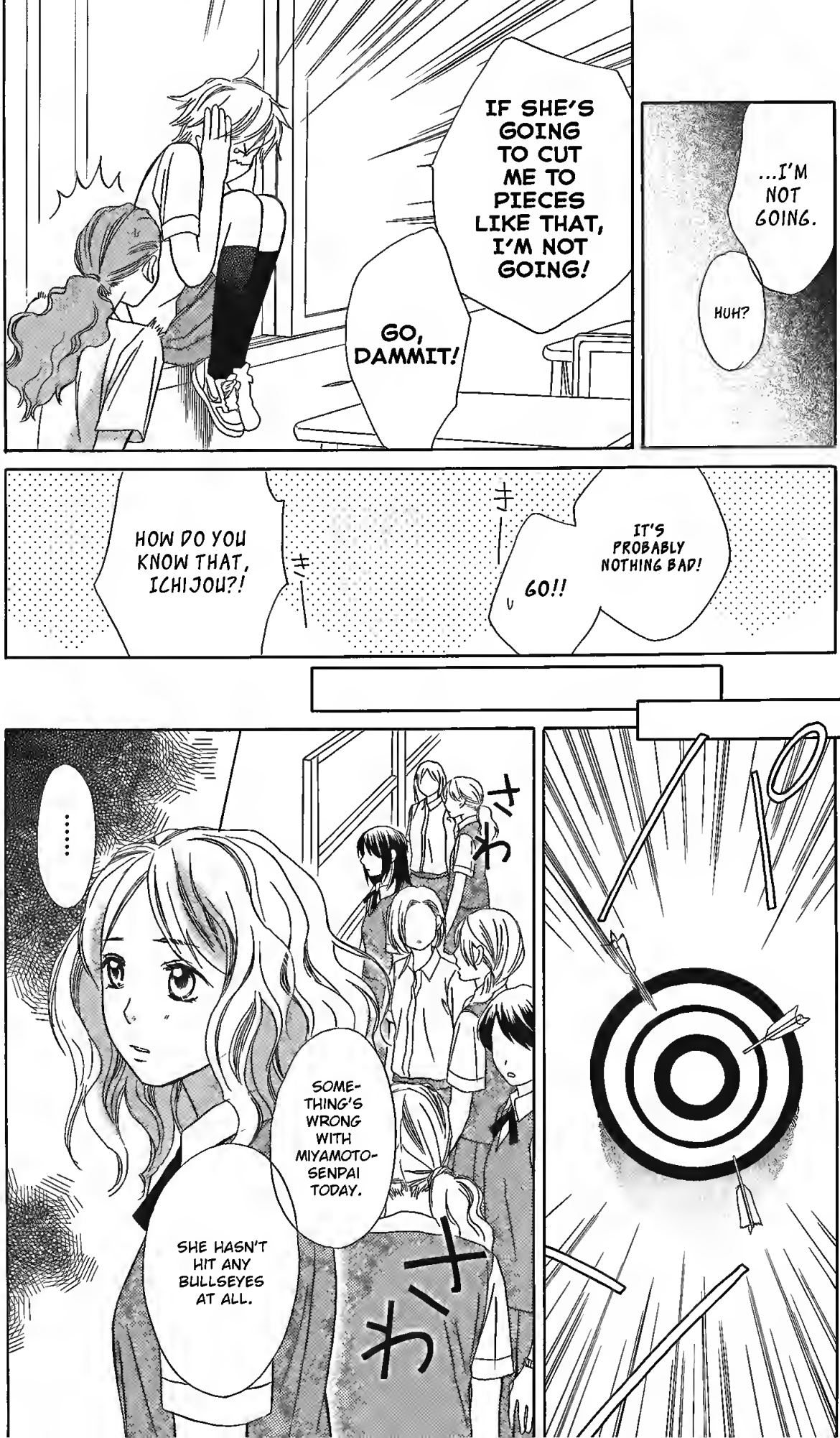
...YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO TALK TO ME?
BECAUSE SHE'S HEAD OVER HEELS FOR YOU RIGHT NOW.
AND... WHY AREN'T YOU ASKING MIYAMOTO-SAN?
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME ABOUT THAT...

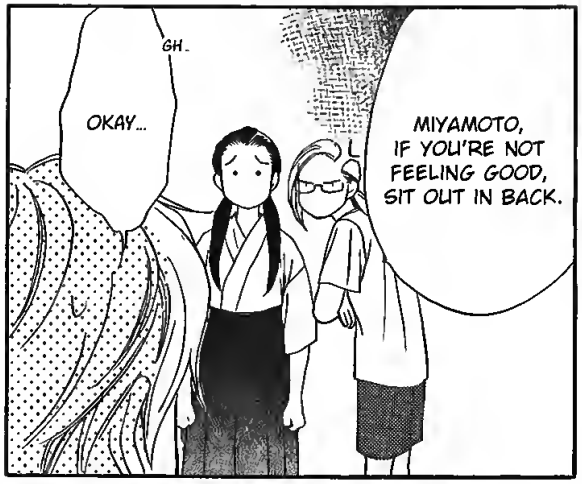
AND YOU'RE THE ONE WITH ALL THE RUMORS ABOUT YOU, RIGHT?
SO THINK ABOUT WHAT I JUST SAID.
AS FOR ME...
I WANT TO RESPECT KANAN'S CHOICE.

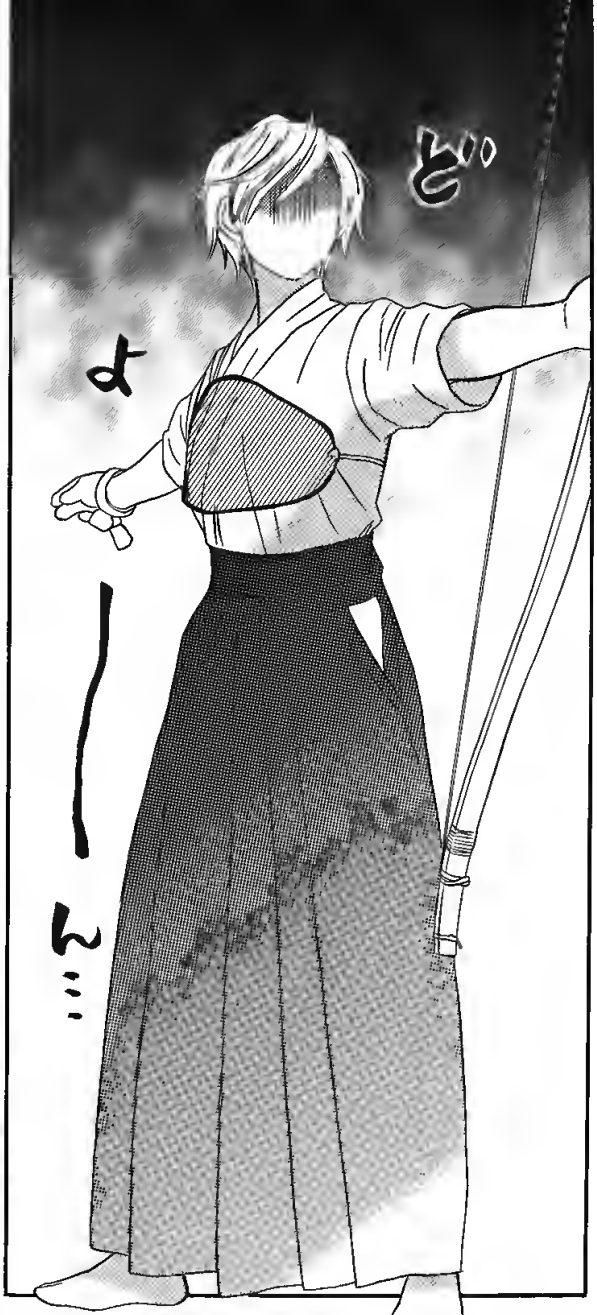
IT'S SO HOT.
WHY IS IT SO HOT AT THIS TIME OF MORNING?
SENPAI! BESSHO-SENPAI!
LOOK!
...MAYBE SHE DIDN'T HEAR ME.
...HEY, ICHIJOU.
WHAT.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA, HUH.
...I KINDA DO.
I was just kidding about that
HUH? YOU DO?
...HUH.
I THINK SENPAI IS AVOIDING ME TODAY,
AND I'M NOT REALLY SURE WHY.
At lunch, too
もんもん
I FLIRTED WITH SENPAI AND DID STUFF EVEN THOUGH SHE DIDN'T LIKE ME...
AH, BUT I DID IT TO HER BECAUSE I LOVED HER SHY LITTLE REACTION, SO MAYBE THAT'S WHY...
もんもん
Are you some kind of pervy old guy?
HEY HEY HEY HEY.
I MEAN, IT WAS WEIRD FOR SENPAI TO BE INTERESTED IN ME IN THE FIRST PLACE...
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
Are you stupid?!
WHAT DO I DO, ICHIJOU? WE'VE BEEN A WEIRD COUPLE FROM THE BEGINNING!

HEY, YOUR PHONE'S VIBRATING.
In your pocket
ぶっぶっ
WELL THEN, YOU KNOW WHAT'S COMING NEXT, THEN.
THE BREAKUP.
Bessho-Senpai
We need to talk. I'm fine whenever club is over, so please come to the usual place we meet.
SO SCARY, SO SCARY...
SHIT, I THINK I TEASED HER TOO MUCH...
COME ON, SHE'S JUST ASKING TO TALK.
She's gonna talk to me about breaking up
THE BREAKUP...


IF SHE'S GOING TO CUT ME TO PIECES LIKE THAT, I'M NOT GOING!
GO, DAMMIT!
...I'M NOT GOING.
HUH?
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT, ICHIJOU?!
キー
IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING BAD!
GO!!
さわ
……
SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH MIYAMOTO-SENPAI TODAY.
SHE HASN'T HIT ANY BULLSEYES AT ALL.
カン


GH.
OKAY...
MIYAMOTO, IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING GOOD, SIT OUT IN BACK.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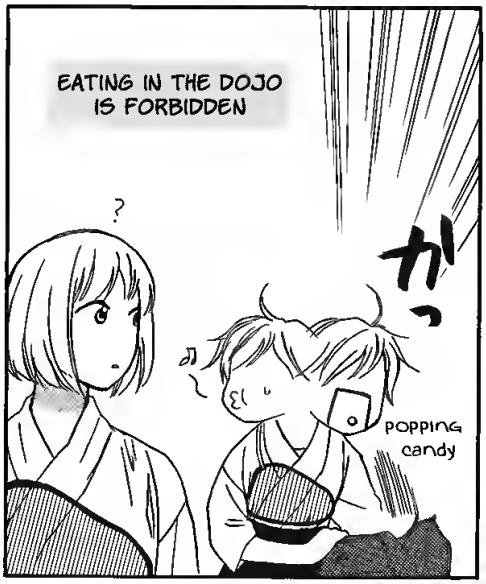
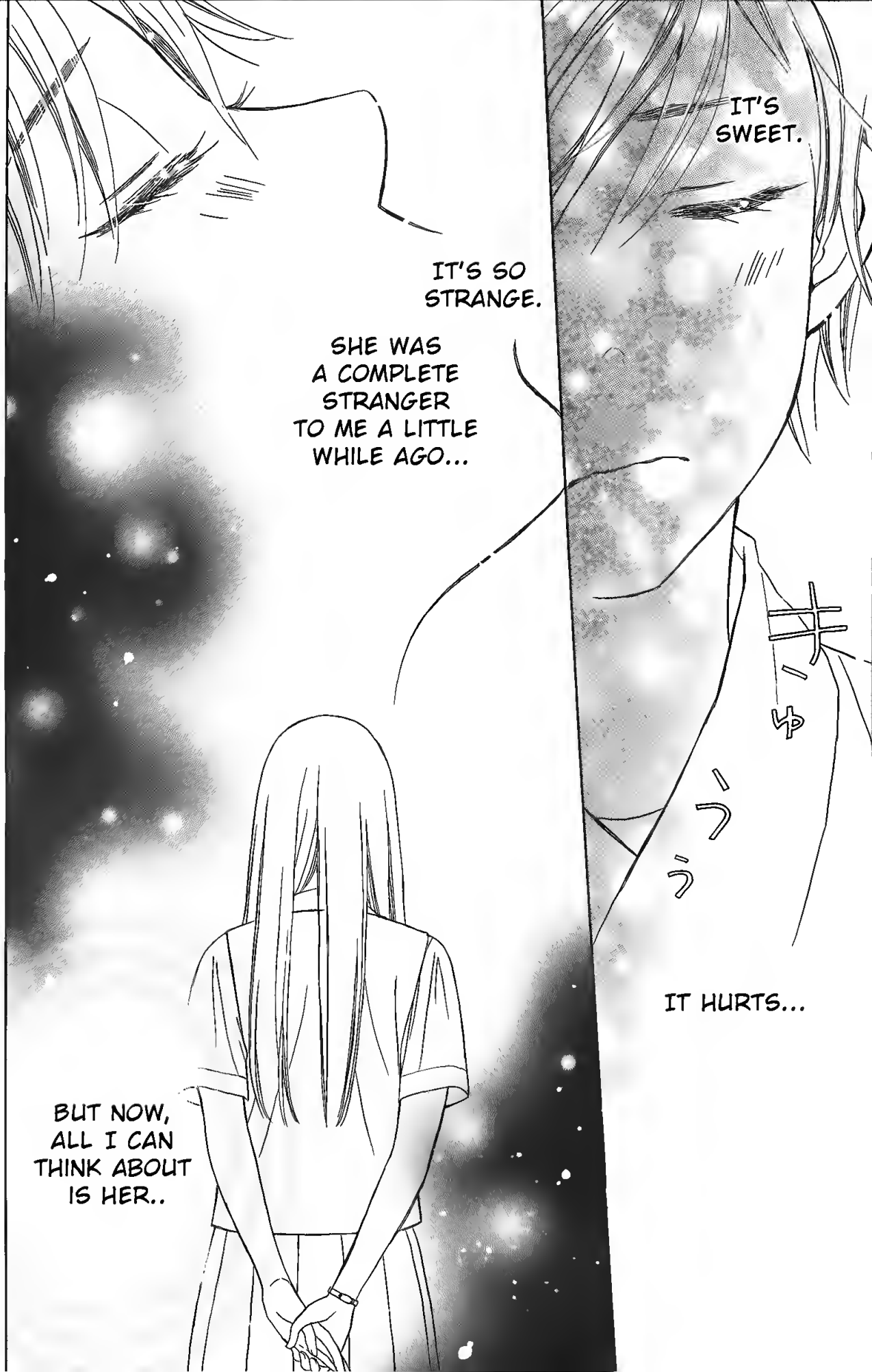
ガサゴソ
GAH, I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!
IT'S SO IMPORTANT FOR ME TO DO MY BEST RIGHT NOW...

コロ...
AH..


EATING IN THE DOJO IS FORBIDDEN
?
かっ
popping candy

きょろ
きょろ
……


IT'S SWEET.
IT'S SO STRANGE.
SHE WAS A COMPLETE STRANGER TO ME A LITTLE WHILE AGO...
IT HURTS...
BUT NOW, ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS HER..

THAT'S RIGHT
IT'D BE THE SAME IN THE END
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.
I CAN'T MAKE HER WAIT TODAY...
IT'D BE THE SAME IN THE END IF I AVOIDED HER AND WENT HOME.

LOVE IS BOTH SWEET AND PAINFUL
NO MATTER WHAT SENPAI SAYS.
I STILL LOVE HER.
SENSEI, EXCUSE ME, BUT I'M COMING BACK IN!
PLEASE LET ME SHOOT!
どすこーい
Yeah, she's back.
She's back.
BUT IF I'M WITH HER, IT'S THE REAL THING
Huh?
IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE SHOOTING, THEN GO HOME!
I'M SORRY!

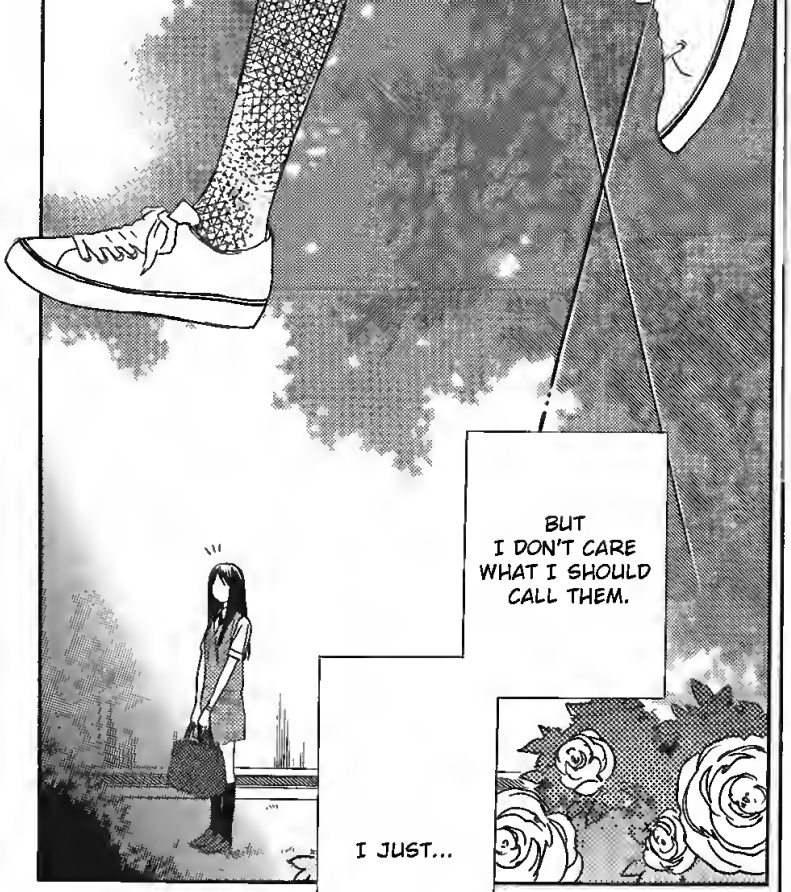
SLIDE
GOOD WORK TODAY!
GOOD WORK!
SE-SENPAI!
MIYAMOTO-SENPAI!
ば
ひ
よっ

I WAS WAITING FOR YOU, SENPAI.
...I WAS WORRIED, SINCE YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WEREN'T FEELING GOOD TODAY...
HUH? WHAT'S WRONG, TAMA-CHAN? I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE STILL HERE.
しゃが
しゃが
SORRY TO RUN OFF ON YOU,
BUT I'VE GOT SOMEWHERE TO BE, AND I'VE GOTTA HURRY...
.....
IT'S A LITTLE SUDDEN, BUT HERE...
WOAH!
THANK YOU!
ちょこ
SENPAI... ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT BESSHO-SENPAI?
HUH?!
I KNOW THAT
BESSHO-SENPAI HAS BEEN IGNORING YOU TODAY, MIYAMOTO-SENPAI...
WH-
WHA?!

BUT I'D NEVER DO THAT, SO...
I'M ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT YOU, SO...
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AFTER HER?!
HUH...
BECAUSE I LIKE HER... I GUESS?
SENPAI... THAT'S NOT TRUE, IS IT?!
I HEARD, I HEARD A RUMOR!
BUT IT'S NOT TRUE, RIGHT?
IT'S JUST BECAUSE GIRLS HAVE A STRONG DESIRE TO BE CLOSE TO PEOPLE,

SO THEY GET REALLY REALLY ATTACHED TO THEIR FRIENDS...
THAT'S WHAT IT IS, RIGHT?!
I MEAN,
IT'D BE WEIRD FOR TWO GIRLS TO BE DATING EACH OTHER!
WEIRD?
I GUESS, MAYBE...

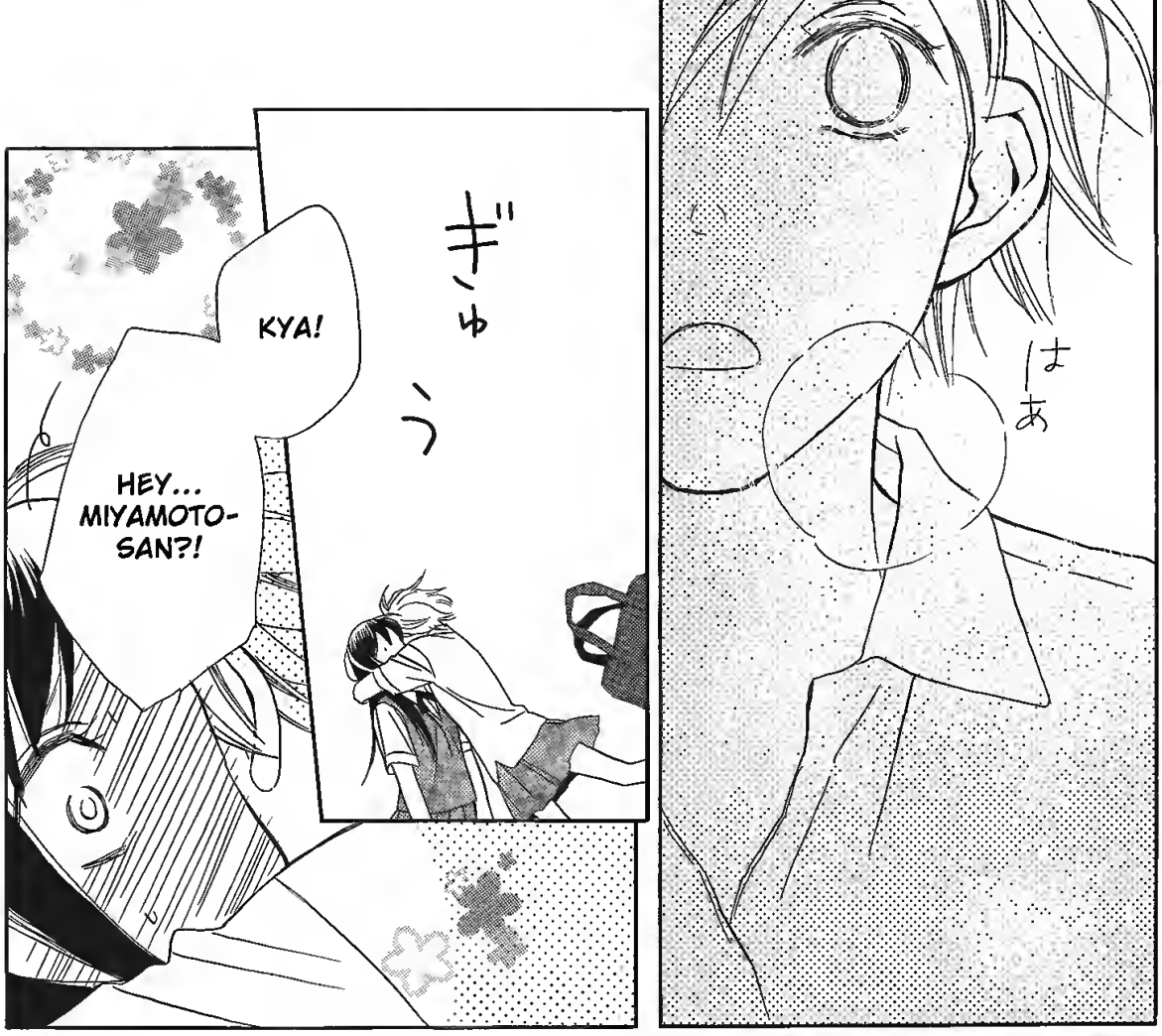
BUT YOU KNOW,
I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT
DOING THAT KIND OF WEIRD THING!



A DESIRE
TO BE
CLOSE

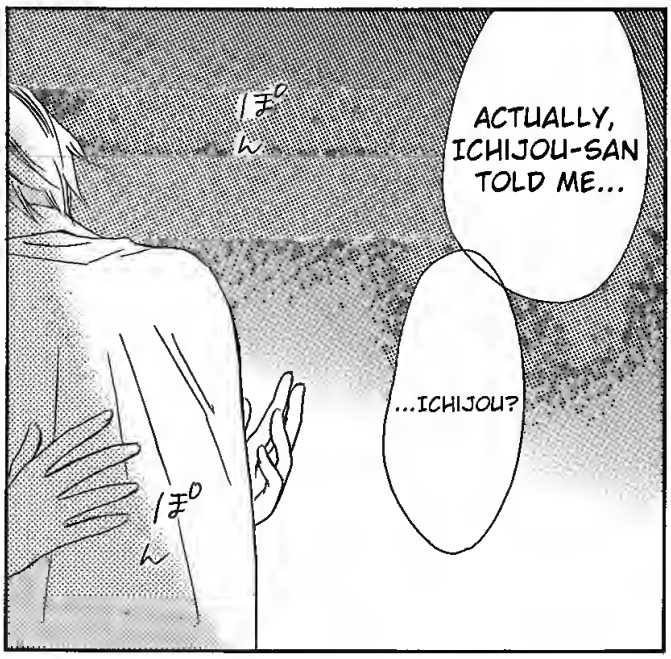
A STRONG
ATTACH-
MENT

MAYBE
THAT'S
WHAT
THESE
FEELINGS
ARE.


ぎゅう
KYA!
HEY... MIYAMOTO-SAN?!
はあ

HUH...
DON'T GIVE UP.
PLEASE, PLEASE...
DON'T!
HUH?
DON'T BREAK UP WITH ME!

AH...
STAY WITH ME...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ACTUALLY, ICHIJOU-SAN TOLD ME...
...ICHIJOU?

I'M SORRY.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU WORRIED.

I'M NOT TELLING YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM HER,
BUT DON'T DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD CAUSE ANY RUMORS, OKAY?

BUT THIS IS AN ALL-GIRLS SCHOOL,
AND GIRLS LOVE SPREADING RUMORS...
IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
WHAT?!
Dammit, Ichijou!
Ah, I wasn't crying!

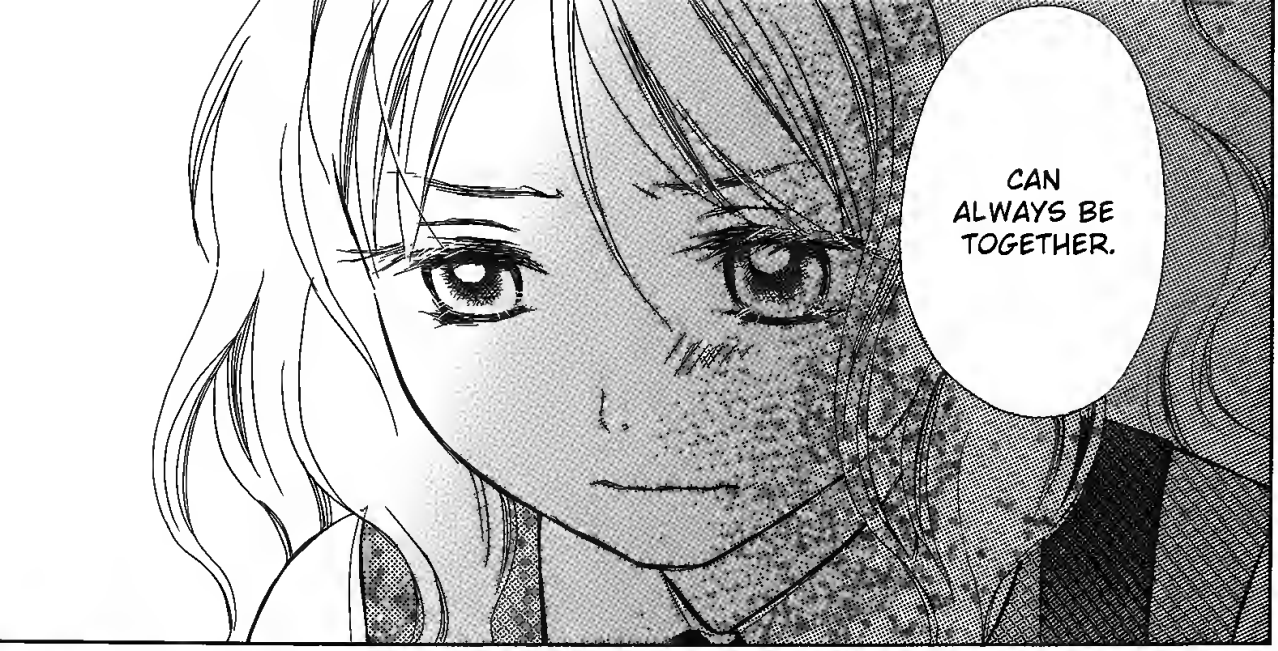
THEY MIGHT TRY TO INTERFERE WITH US.
THEY CAN SPREAD IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE,
AND IF THE TEACHERS OR ADULTS FOUND OUT...

THEN WE HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO PROTECT WHAT WE HAVE.
IF WE REALLY WANT TO BE TOGETHER FOREVER,

...IS IT "WEIRD" TO FEEL THIS WAY?
.....

SO NOBODY NOTICES WHAT'S GOING ON.
SO THAT THE TWO OF US

SO...
LET'S BE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON, OKAY?


CAN ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.

THE TIGHT PAIN IN MY CHEST
THIS FEELING ISN'T JUST A SWEET ONE
I'M REALLY SORRY.
I WAS GOING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT BEFORE STAYING AWAY FROM YOU,
BUT I WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE WOULD THINK, SO THINGS GOT SUPER AWKWARD BETWEEN US...
YOU'RE SO MEAN! YOU HURT MY FEELINGS!
I SAID I'M SORRY!

THAT'S WHY THIS
IS THE NEXT STEP FOR US
SO THE TWO OF US CAN ALWAYS BE TOGETHER

… END ……